

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested. Support for all of the amendments made is found in the specification as filed. No new matter has been added.

A check in the amount of \$302 is attached hereto for filing fees for one extra independent claim (\$86) and twelve extra claims over twenty ( $\$18 * 12 = \$216$ ).

In light of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant believes that the application is now in condition for examination and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

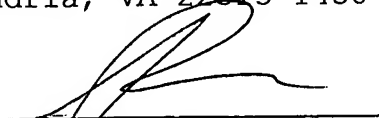


Frank J. McGue  
(Reg. No. 33,422)  
Attorney of Record

10801 North 32nd Street  
Suite 5  
Phoenix, AZ 85028  
(602) 494-0311

**CERTIFICATE OF MAILING**

I hereby certify that this PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service as First Class mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on January 2, 2004.

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Frank J. McGue